

Abstract

This thesis deals with one century of Czech critical reflection on Jaroslav Hašek's novel *The Good Soldier Švejk*, i.e. the period from the publication of the first volume in 1921 to 2021. Using reviews in the press, literary critical polemics, selected literary and scientific studies and relevant articles we follow the transformation of the critical discourse about the mentioned novel. The mutual coherence of the viewed sources is ensured by the emphasis on intratextuality, the overview character of the work is complemented by references to other works. This work then not only collects individual texts in the form of bibliographic records and recapitulations of key theses, but also places them in a cultural, historical or social context using interpretive blocks. Using interpretations, we create a narrative culminating in the conclusion when we report on the evolution of the work's critical reception. After its publication, the book is accepted by a wide readership, but literary criticism ignores it with only few exceptions. The work saw rehabilitation in the second half of the 20s of the 20th century thanks to the critical polemics of the time. Since then, the novel has undergone several revisions – in the 1930s it was interpreted as a proletarian novel, during the Second World War it was banned by the Nazis, and after the communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948 it was viewed through the lens of socialist realism and its anti-capitalist nature was accentuated. In the 1960s, conditions eased along with the necessity of an ideological framework, and new themes came to the fore – individual motifs of the work, such as humor or the language components, but also the suitability of the novel as compulsory reading in schools. During the so-called normalization in the 1970s and 1980s, we observe a split in the reception – on the one hand, official criticism in Czechoslovakia following the tradition of the 1950s in understanding the novel as a folk work of a working-class author, on the other hand, exiled authors following the themes of the 1960s – issues of genre, the internal structure of the work, the role of the narrator and also interpreting the work in new ways, e.g. as avant-garde, Dadaist or absurdist literature, etc. After the Velvet Revolution, the novel is revised to a limited extent, especially on the occasions of important anniversaries. In the 21st century, the novel is mainly associated with misleading stereotypes stemming from film adaptations and the distortion of the image of the work and its protagonist in the social consciousness. In recent years, we have been observing the need for new optics, e.g. through feminist theses.